



Travel Security Guidelines

Informative guide for ILRI staff



First and for more most...

Before travelling check the website of the Foreign Ministry of your home country for advice on travelling to the country/region you will be visiting. (we can also give the websites of the UK FCO, US State Dept etc.



- Keep a low profile
- Learn at least a few phrases in the local language
- Leave a copy of your itinerary with your family and with your office administrator
- Go through your carry-on luggage to remove items not needed or which pose a security risk, such as:

Excess credit cards, Membership- or ID- cards for any group that may be targeted
Business cards with provocative information or revealing national, ethnic or religious affiliation
Political, religious or sexually explicit literature
Anything that looks like a weapon
expensive or religious jewelry

Must haves...

Depending on your situation, consider bringing:

- All necessary official documents (e.g. passport, visa)
- Photocopy of passport, visas and tickets or a list of essential information (carried separately)
- A list of credit card numbers and loss-notification numbers
- Enough money in the local currency inclusive coins or tokens to use a pay phone
- Enough of any required medication to survive delays, carried in original container with prescription
- Laptops and notebooks if you must (carry them in your hand luggage)
- Any medical or personal hygiene products which you use periodically, in case of recurring chronic problems



What to wear...

Dress to blend in with the foreign environment - Keep a low profile

- Leave behind expensive jewelry and clothes that mark you as a wealthy foreigner
- Be conscious of local norms in dress, speech, etc.



What to carry...

Travel with secure luggage:

- Locked, non-descript luggage, secured with a strap (hard luggage is safer)
- Use closed-faced luggage tags
- Carry-on bag with necessities in case of lost luggage
- Travel light

How to communicate...

Check whether your mobile phone will work in the country/region you are travelling to. If not check to see if you can buy a local SIM card.

Always remember while travelling to...

- Keep Alert
- Be aware of what is around at all times
- Travel during daylight hours, if possible
- If available, use valet service
- Confirm flight time, arrive at airport early
- Say good-byes at the curb
- Move immediately through security check area to the departure lounge
- Say no if asked to carry any bags or packages for strangers or, for that matter, friends, unless you are certain of what is inside
- Say no if asked to watch luggage
- Move away from any disturbance or anyone receiving exceptional attention
- Don't leave your baggage unattended, even for a minute



On the plane...

- Check under your seat for left luggage
- Don't give any personal information to fellow passengers
- Take note of the emergency exits

When you get there...

- Select your taxi carefully, don't ride in unlicensed cabs (during your stay: when ordering a Radio Taxi by phone mention o-n-l-y the area you want to be taken to - not the exact address!)
- Learn how to operate the telephone and carry enough coins or tokens to use a pay phone
- Know who will be meeting you, their names and appearance. If there has been a change, call to check it out. Don't go with anyone you do not trust
- Avoid dangerous areas of cities

In the hotel...

- Meet visitors in the hotel lobby - don't give out your room number
- Make sure to chain lock your door while you are there
- Make sure your room number is not overheard while obtaining your key at the front desk
- Check your exit options, count the number of doors to the nearest exit, and learn how to work the escape systems
- Do not leave valuables or important information (such as your itinerary) in your room unless stored in the room safe
- Do not conduct sensitive conversations over the hotel telephone or fax sensitive information
- In case of fire: Do not open your door if it is hot. If smoke or fire is in the corridor, shut your door and seal it with wet bedding and towels. Open a window, unless smoke comes in from outside. If possible, evacuate immediately, placing a wet towel around your mouth, taking your room key and crouching low near the floor. Do not use elevators

On the streets...

- Stay alert and aware of your surroundings; keep an eye on belongings and your hand on your valuables
- Do not pay with large bills or count currency in public
- Stay away from crowds and don't investigate a disturbance; just leave. Even peaceful gatherings can turn ugly
- Carry the phone numbers of emergency contacts - e.g. your host, organisation, and diplomatic representation
- Always carry an ID card or a copy of it - a legal requirement in many countries
- Guard against pickpockets
- Keep your distance from the curb
- If you are followed, change direction and enter a well-lighted business establishment
- If a car follows you, turn and walk the opposite way

In a car...

- Carjacking is on the increase!
- Do not drive yourself in a city or country with which you are unfamiliar
- Select a rental car with a lockable trunk which is as inconspicuous as possible
- Ask the rental agent about driving laws and customs, road signs and maps
- Carefully check your travel route on a street map in advance
- Be aware of areas you should avoid
- Keep your car doors locked at all times and the windows closed
- Be careful where you park your car
- Always lock your car when unattended and avoid leaving valuables in the car



In case of an emergency...

Crime

- **In a criminal attack, give up your belongings willingly, without argument**
- Report the crime immediately to local police authorities. In certain countries check your embassy before contacting the police
- If someone with a weapon approaches and corners you, remember your life is at stake and one wrong move could be your last. Plan ahead how you will react and remember to think rationally
- Report passport theft to your embassy immediately, and initiate the procedure to obtain a new passport
- Report loss of tickets, travellers cheques, credit cards and other documents to the organisation that issued them



Kidnap / Hostage Situations

- Do not behave in any way to make yourself stand out; avoid threatening movements and do not stare
- Do exactly as you are told, and do nothing without asking permission first
- Remain alert and prepared in the event of rescue attempt or escalation of violence
- If you are singled out for questioning, your answers must be consistent with documentation you are carrying. Volunteer no additional information
- Remain courteous, but dignified
- If there is a rescue attempt, stay as close to the ground as possible
- Do not try to be a hero



State Emergency (coup d'état, revolution, social unrest, etc.)

- If trouble starts, contact your local embassy
- Call or have someone contact the embassy with your location to facilitate your evacuation if needed
- Stay off the streets, remain in your hotel, and if necessary move only in daylight in groups
- Avoid main squares and boulevards, government buildings, radio/TV stations, military installations, the airport, harbour, banks and shopping centers. All are key targets during take-overs or coups
- Do not discuss opinions about the political situation
- Have the hotel management or embassy update you on any developments



Natural Disaster

- Have a pre-established plan (with family and colleagues) for where to go in the event of a disaster; that plan should include going immediately to your local diplomatic representation or the Red Cross to report yourself alive. (Note: the symbol for the Red Cross in some Islamic countries is a red crescent in place of the Red Cross.)
- Contact your home to save your family worry

Medical Emergency

- Never be afraid to avail yourself of local medical care
- Some medicines are dangerous for people of different countries; find a doctor who has treated foreigners, such as a hotel doctor, recommended by your embassy, the Red

Cross, or another expatriate



Emergencies / Personal assistance...

- Don't admit fault or make any statement (other than for the police)
- Contact your diplomatic representation and your air carrier if necessary

For staff posted outside Nairobi and Addis...

- Register with your embassy and follow advice issued by it
- Follow security advice issued by your host organization
- If you are unsure about any security matter seek advice from ILRI HR, your supervisor and/or host organization
- Bring to the attention of ILRI HR, Regional Representatives and your supervisor any security matter which you think they should be aware of.

Useful websites

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK) - <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/>

US Department of State International Travel information - <http://travel.state.gov/travel/>

For further information or assistance contact:

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